

Prunus x yedoensis Yoshino Cherry¹

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INTRODUCTION

Yoshino Cherry grows quickly to 20 feet, has beautiful bark marked with prominent lenticels but is a relatively short-lived tree (Fig. 1). It has upright to horizontal branching, making it ideal for planting along walks and over patios. The white to pink flowers which occur in early spring before the leaves develop are sometimes damaged by late frosts or very windy conditions. This is the tree along with 'Kwanzan' Cherry in Washington, DC, which makes such a show each spring.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Prunus x yedoensis*

Pronunciation: PROO-nus x yed-oh-EN-sis

Common name(s): Yoshino Cherry

Family: *Rosaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 5B through 8A (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: Bonsai; wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; shade tree; narrow tree lawns (3-4 feet wide); specimen; sidewalk cutout (tree pit); no proven urban tolerance

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range



Figure 1. Mature Yoshino Cherry.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 35 to 45 feet

Spread: 30 to 40 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms

Crown shape: round; vase shape

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: medium

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: double serrate; serrate

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval); oblong; ovate

Leaf venation: banchidodrome; pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

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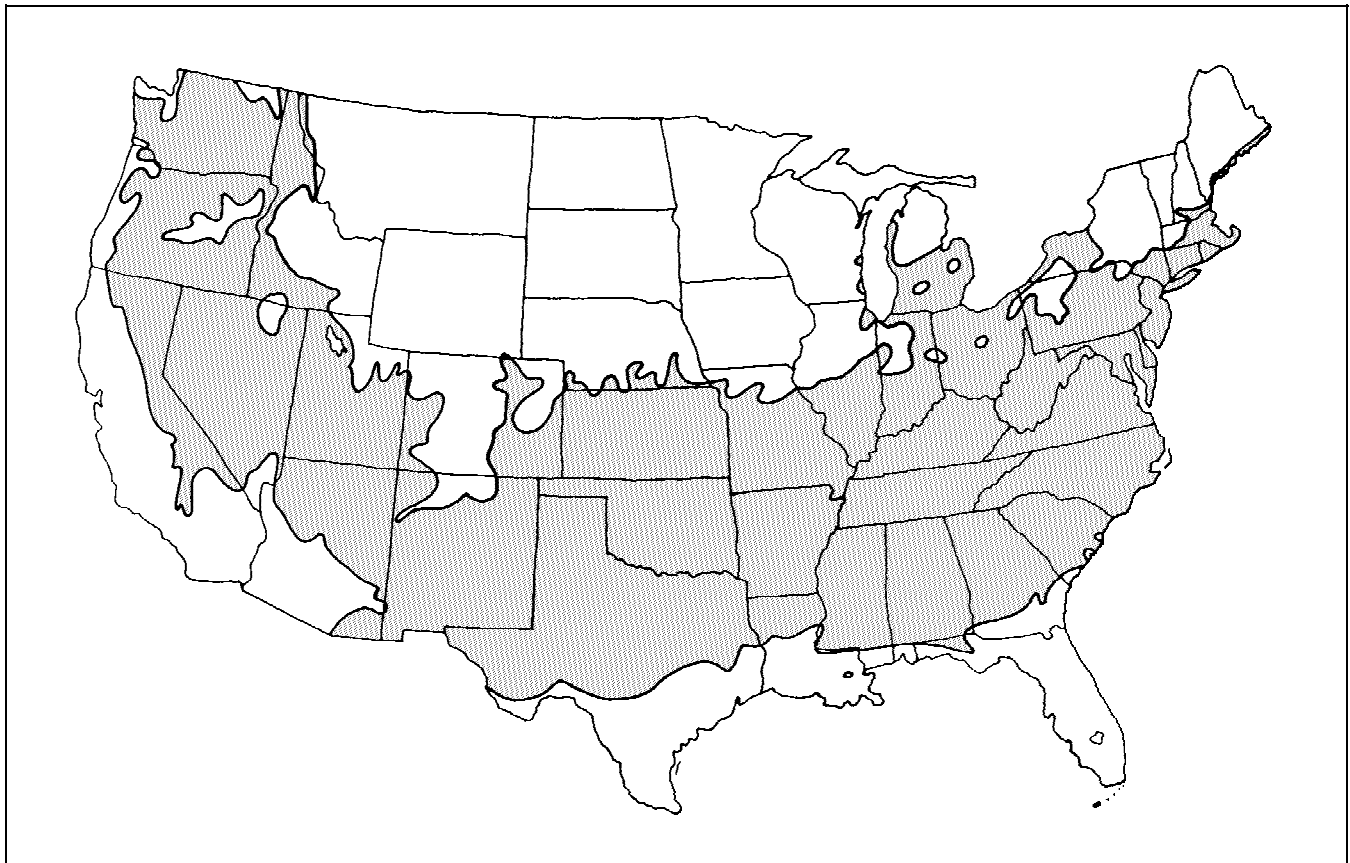


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf color: green
Fall color: yellow
Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: pink; white
Flower characteristics: spring flowering; very showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round
Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch
Fruit covering: fleshy
Fruit color: black
Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; showy trunk; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

Pruning requirement: requires pruning to develop strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: brown

Current year twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; acidic; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: none

Soil salt tolerance: poor

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible

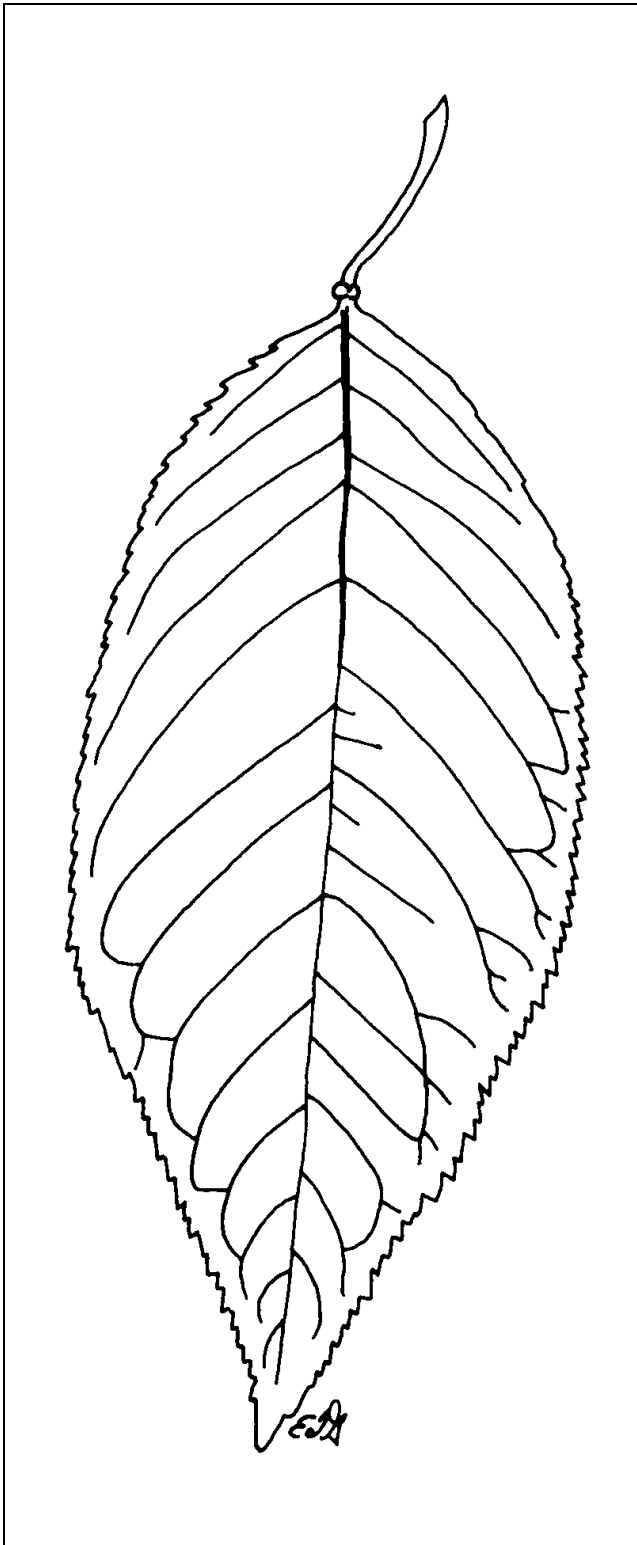


Figure 3. Foliage of Yoshino Cherry.

Pest resistance: very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect tree health or aesthetics

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Best used as a specimen or near the deck or patio for shade, Yoshino Cherry also works nicely along walks or near a water feature. Not a street or parking lot tree due to drought-sensitivity. Large specimens take on a weeping habit with delicate branchlets arranged on upright-spreading branches affixed to a short, stout trunk. A lovely addition to a sunny spot where a beautiful specimen is needed. Winter form, yellow fall color, and pretty bark make this a year round favorite.

Provide good drainage in an acidic soil for best growth. Crowns become one-sided unless they receive light from all around the plant, so locate in full sun. Select another tree to plant if soil is poorly drained but otherwise Yoshino Cherry adapts to clay or loam. Roots should be kept moist and should not be subjected to prolonged drought.

The cultivars are: 'Akebona' ('Daybreak') - flowers softer pink; 'Perpendens' - irregularly pendulous branches; 'Shidare Yoshino' ('Perpendens') - irregularly pendulous branches.

Pests

Aphids cause distortion of new growth, deposits of honeydew, and sooty mold.

Borers attack flowering cherries under stress. Keep trees healthy with regular fertilizer applications.

Scales of several types infest Prunus. Horticultural oil can be used to help control overwintering stages.

Spider mites cause yellowing or stippling but are very difficult to see. They are usually recognized only after plant symptoms are quite advanced.

Tent caterpillars make large webbed nests in trees then eat the foliage. One defoliation may not be serious and small nests can be pruned out and destroyed. Use *Bacillus thuringiensis* when the insects are first seen and are still small.

Diseases

A bacterium causes leaf spot and twig cankers on cherry. Small, reddish spots dry, and drop out, giving a shot-holed appearance. Defoliation can be severe when conditions favor disease development. Fertilize infected trees and prune out infected branches.

A fungus causes reddish spots which drop out leaving shot holes. Once the hole appear the leaves may drop. The disease is worse in wet weather.

Black knot causes black swellings or galls on the branches. Branches with galls are pruned out.

Powdery mildew causes a white coating on the leaves.

Yoshino Cherry may be subject to witches broom. Branches are deformed and clusters of small branches form. Infected branches bloom and leaf out earlier. Brooms are pruned out, to help control the disease.